

# Quid Novi

**McGill University, Faculty of Law**  
**Volume 27, no. 11, November 21, 2006**

## SWIMMINGLY ANESTHE- TIZED



Eil, mon ami! T'as tu des problems suivants?

- ✓ Anxiety parce que t'as trois examens à 100% la même journée?
- ✓ Insomnie?
- ✓ Depression parce que t'as pas eu un offer de stage encore?
- ✓ Difficulty à faire dedo?
- ✓ Problems à te concentrer sur la lecture d'affaires ben plates qu'y ont pas de rapport avec le reality?
- ✓ Manque de interest dans le meaning des phrases en latin?
- ✓ Envie soudaine de tuer Peter Hogg?

Ben, désespère pas là parce que, Uncle Tom là, y'a le solution pour toé,

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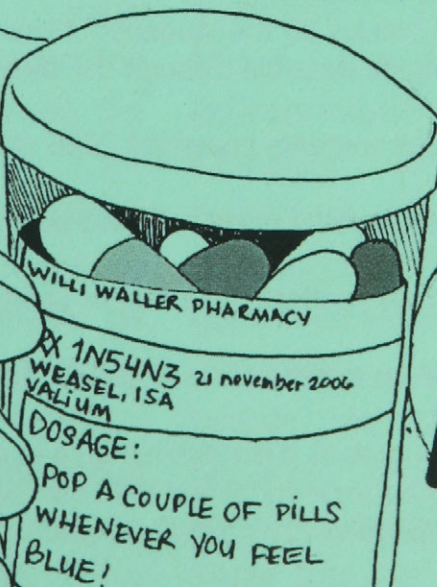
toutes tes problems mentals vont disappear tout de suite! Ben sûr, tu peux te reposer pour une couple de semaines mais t'as pas le temps! Ou tu peux lâcher le Law School mais tu vas disappoiter tes parents! C'est pour ça que

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chum! Appelle maintenant le number au bas du screen pis ton santé mental va être

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## EDITORIAL

by **Andrea Gorys (Law II)**  
**Co-Editor-in-Chief**

Why have an issue about mental well-being? First of all, really, none of us will be able to function without a good dose of health, and that includes our mental health. Secondly, it has been shown that Law students have particularly bad mental health. Mental health services and the Counseling services here at McGill are often flooded with law students who are overstressed, over-anxious, and having a very difficult time. The thing that is important to remember is: if you feel that way, you are not alone! And furthermore, it is ok to seek help. From the overwhelming amount of responses we got last year, it is clear that mental well-being is a subject that is close to most people's hearts. I would like to commend those people who were brave enough to tackle this difficult issue and put forward their personal experiences. I hope that others draw strength and inspiration from our writers. I also hope that the efforts of the Quid, the Mental Well-Being Committee, and the students who have shared their stories with us, manage to bring about some positive changes for people's everyday lives. Please remember, there are lots of people here in the Faculty and at McGill generally who are ready and willing to help you. So, here is wishing you all some good mental health!

<http://www.mcgill.ca/studenthealth/>  
<http://www.mcgill.ca/counselling/>  
<http://www.mcgill.ca/mentalhealth/>

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Toute contribution doit indiquer l'auteur et son origine et n'est publiée qu'à la discrétion du comité de rédaction, qui basera sa décision sur la politique de rédaction telle que décrite à l'adresse:  
<http://www.law.mcgill.ca/quid/epolicy/html>.

Contributions should preferably be submitted as a .doc attachment.



# LA SEMAINE DU BIEN-ÊTRE

by Marguerite Tinawi (LAW II)

Chers condisciples du Droit, Apparemment, cette semaine c'est la semaine du *Well-Being* ou, dans sa version francisée, la semaine du Bien-Être. Moi je trouve ça fantastique! Pas vous? Pendant une semaine, on va être Bien. Ça va être la plus belle semaine de tout le semestre, on va tous flotter sur de petits nuages de bonheur, de satisfaction, de détente absolue... Nos profs vont annuler tous leurs cours, LegalTrac va se mettre à rédiger nos travaux à notre place, les cabinets vont nous envoyer des lettres de supplication pour qu'on se joigne à eux, la Cour Suprême va nous citer *ad nauseam*, les hommes vivront d'amour et cette magnifique semaine se terminera dans dans une apothéose inouïe : un tsunami de bière gratuite inondera la faculté toute entière, de l'Atrium au SAO! Pas pire, hein?

La seule chose qui me chipote un peu, c'est que s'ils décident vraiment d'inonder la faculté, les livres à la biblio vont pas tenir le coup. Ça serait triste, quand même. En plus, moi, je les trouve utiles, ces livres. Comment ça? Ah... pour

répondre à cette question, il faudrait que je vous révèle LE secret le plus secret de ma flamboyante réussite académique. Bon, c'est un peu dur pour mon sens aiguisé de la compétition et de l'individualisme, mais j'estime que vous en valez la peine. Alors écoutez bien!

Lorsque vous allez à la bibliothèque, le truc, c'est de toujours s'asseoir à proximité d'une étagère de livres. Je sais, ça paraît ridicule, mais continuez à lire, vous verrez. Une fois que vous êtes à proximité des livres, commencez à travailler. Creusez vous le cerveau (pas trop profond quand même, vous pourriez porter atteinte aux papilles gustatives, et ça, c'est une très mauvaise chose, croyez moi). Creusez-vous le cerveau avec prudence, donc. Barbouillez votre gigantesque coursepack de couleurs vives pour lui donner un air sympathique. Évaluez combien de pages d'avance votre voisine de gauche a sur vous. Maudissez-la et recourez à l'hypnose pour ralentir son rythme. Cogitez, raturez, mouchez-vous le nez, pitonnez, enregistrez...

Mais n'oubliez jamais que votre plus grand ennemi vous attend au détour d'une page. Cet ennemi, on le connaît tous. Certains l'appellent Morphée; moi, comme Harry P., je préfère l'appeler par son vrai nom : Mister Sommeil. Comme vous le savez sans doute déjà, Mister Sommeil est très rusé. Il guette la moindre de vos distractions, le moindre coup d'œil désespéré à votre montre, le moindre bâillement, la moindre paupière qui s'alourdit. Tant que vous n'aurez pas succombé à ses perfides avances, il ne vous lâchera pas. Bien sûr, vous essayez de résister de votre mieux, mais hélas, L'Heureux-Dubé se révèle une piètre alliée dans votre croisade contre Mister Sommeil.

Que faire alors? C'est simple. Faites comme moi. Trompez l'adversaire. **D i r i g e z - v o u s** subrepticement vers l'étagère de livres à proximité. Choisissez un livre qui soit bien dodu (la qualité de votre défense en dépend). Déposez la brique sur votre table, reculez votre chaise et installez confortablement votre tête sur cet oreiller fraîchement constitué (conseil de l'auteure : pour

plus de confort, essayez la version brique + écharpe). L'étape qui suit est cruciale : vous devez accorder à Mister Sommeil dix minutes – quinze, au grand maximum – de victoire. Rejoignez donc son monde obscur, complimentez-le sur sa beauté ténébreuse. C'est un homme comme les autres, vous savez... Flattez-le à outrance et il n'y verra que du feu...

Parlant de feu, une fois vos dix minutes écoulées, vous devez aveugler Mister Sommeil par l'éclat de votre victoire. Quittez d'un coup sec le monde des songes pour rejoindre celui des pensées songées. Vos neurones grouilleront s o u d a i n e m e n t d'impatience à l'idée d'entamer un énième article du Code de procédure civile. En un quart d'heure, vous aurez lu tout le coursepack, tandis que votre voisine vous lancera des regards de désespoir et d'envie. Ah, si elle savait! Votre triomphe est total! Bravo, vous êtes un héros! la semaine du Bien-être est parfois source de confessions étonnantes. Profitez-en. ■



# LSA and Faculty Life

by Nicolas Leblanc (LAW IV)

I am writing this article after reading Kyle Gervais' article from the Quid's Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> issue and Myriam Couillard-Castonguay's reply in Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>'s Quid.

This isn't a point-counterpoint exercise. Rather, in my last few weeks as a student in this faculty, I would like to take this opportunity to provide the LSA with comments that are meant to be constructive, and I hope they are taken as such.

Tout d'abord, en toute honnêteté intellectuelle, je dois vous indiquer que je partage l'avis de M. Gervais exprimé dans la sur la majorité de ses commentaires. Je mentionne aussi que j'écris ces lignes dans le Quid parce que je crois que les sujets qui ont été discutés à date sont d'intérêt général et que ce débat appartient à toute la Faculté. I don't have a score to settle and I'm not in it for anything. This is my last semester anyway. The LSA is everyone's association and these comments are for anyone to read. And if LSA members think it's sensational that students might have expectations and voice them openly, this might be a

sign...

Je pense que ce qu'il faut retenir de cette discussion n'est pas l'évaluation de projets individuels, mais plutôt l'évaluation de l'ensemble du travail de l'AÉD. L'AÉD doit avant tout faire en sorte d'améliorer la vie des étudiants à la Faculté. Nous savons tous que les membres de l'AÉD s'impliquent bénévolement (et peut-être un tout petit peu pour leur CV, mais on peut leur pardonner!) . Personnellement, je ne demande pas que tout ce qui provient de l'AÉD m'éblouisse; mais il faut que ce soit utile à la Faculté. Le « mieux » est parfois l'ennemi du « bien ». Un *Bogenda* en novembre, ce n'est pas utile, qu'il soit meilleur que celui de l'an dernier ou non.

One of the lessons to learn then is whatever project the LSA wants to do, it has to be timely. If it's too complicated to complete on time, reduce the scope, work on the improvement throughout the year and launch it next year, or get more people to work on it. I understand that there are reasons why the *Bogenda*, or the lounge, took a long

time to get done, but to me, that simply spells poor planning or poor project management. "I lost my disk" and "My dog ate my homework" aren't for law school.

Another lesson to learn, I feel, is that if the LSA is going to be working for students, then students have to know what the LSA is doing. Implementing ready-made initiatives without so much as prior notice that some changes are about to be made is obviously not well received by the students. You know what I'm talking about. Frankly, I have not involved myself in the "changes to Coffee House debate", partly because I find astonishing that we'd spend all this energy on an issue as crucial as free booze. But whatever. From what I know, the LSA's idea of getting sponsorships that will have a longer lasting effect at the faculty seems like a good idea. But presenting it to the Faculty as a "done deal" is not how a good idea should be implemented. When it comes to the LSA, a good idea is one law students want. And I don't mean we need a referendum!! We have more than enough red tape, thank you very

much. I am saying that working for the students means working with the students.

J'ajoute encore un commentaire. L'AÉD n'est pas l'endroit pour accomplir ses ambitions personnelles. Je ne dis pas que c'est le cas des membres actuels ou passés du LSA, je n'en ai aucune idée. Mais je pense que c'est quelque chose qu'il faut garder à l'esprit. S'impliquer dans une association qui représente des constituants demande une certaine abnégation, à moins que ce soit le Politburo (avec respect!). Si les étudiants rejettent une idée, tant pis, même si elle est bonne. On peut réaliser un projet autrement, mais les initiatives de l'AÉD doivent être pour l'ensemble de la Faculté. Et si un projet débute sous l'AÉD d'une année et se termine l'AÉD de l'année suivante, tant pis (ou tant mieux!); on se souviendra autant de celle qui a eu l'idée que de celle qui a coupé le ruban.

Pour qu'on ne me dise pas que je ne fais que me plaindre, je vais faire une suggestion qui, je pense, a une certaine valeur. Je n'aimerais rien de ►



mieux que des professeurs et des étudiants débattent de cette idée dans le prochain Quid. C'est d'ailleurs une suggestion qui pourrait aider le « Mental health and well being » à la Faculté. Il s'agit d'un problème que j'ai eu, et avec lequel, je pense, d'autres étudiants sont familiers. I suggest that professors who cancel classes and schedule

make-up classes outside of regular class time be required to provide students with an outline of the material covered during the make up class. When students put their schedule together, they rely on the information on Minerva and the registration materials. They arrange their work, extracurricular activities, student involvement, leisure, whatever,

accordingly. At university level, I think we can't expect that students drop whatever plans they have to attend make-up classes. So, Professors, please, schedule-make ups, but lend a hand to those who can't make it. I'm not asking for a typed lecture, but point-form notes on what was covered and what are the important points shouldn't be hard to come

by... Professors, you've prepared your classes, right?

I'd rely on the hope that Professors will read the Quid and agree that this is a good idea, but I've asked for this several times, and drew blanks each time.

So, LSA, students are talking, and I hope you're listening. ■

# The Ellipse

by Andrew Biteen (LAW II)

*A response to the Square being, um, a square*

Since my friend Circle has declined the opportunity to refute his old nemesis, I have stepped up in his stead. What, you may ask, has caused this strange oblong shape - normally associated with astronomy and exercise machines - to come out of the dark? Well (and I promise these are the last puns), my focal point is rock and roll and I have a major axis to grind. While Guns N' (expletive-deleted) Roses might be on their way back, it was wrong and - in the case of those too fresh to remember the 80's - misleading for Square to proclaim G'N'R' as "the best of the best."

As is his usual, Square sets up a smokescreen when pointing out the shortcomings of the competition for title of "best hard

rockers." Agreed, Bon Jovi, AC/DC, Whitesnake, and Poison pale in comparison to G'N'R'. However, the band that topped em all - thereby leaving Axl Rose looking like a mere pretty boy himself - was Metallica. While the younger generation associates Lars Ulrich and his gang with their uncool stance against file-sharing, let it be known that their hardcore fans once derided Metallica as sell-outs for touring with the Gunners in 1992. Also let it be known that the fans rioting after the abridged Montreal stop on that tour set in place an eventual class action lawsuit against Guns N Roses, not Metallica, because they figured that even the judiciary appreciated how Metallica was way too sweet to be held liable. Finally, let it be known that my then 14-year-old sister wanted to

go see the show for G'N'R', but my parents didn't let her because of the presence of the Metallica fans.

Admittedly, it's not the band I've praised, it's their fans, so let's go toe-to-toe musically. If Square prefers to go minute-for-minute with rock ballads (btw everyone knows that *Estranged* is the better choice to *November Rain*), the 8-minute long *One* puts all others to shame. If we're talking about "fist pumping," it's clear that Slash never came close to the speed and energy of *And Justice for All*. With the rest fitting somewhere between the two, Metallica sold 57 million albums without any album titles quite as non-rocky as *The Spaghetti Incident*. Also, while Axl was launching a futile comeback some years back through the MTV Video Awards,

Metallica launched its new tour and new bassist by playing San Quentin Prison, where previously, only Johnny Cash - the baddest one of them all - had dared trod.

If Square wants to dismiss this rant as mere nationalistic longings for those good old days when men in Quebec stood out from our anglo brethren by sporting long hair, tight jeans, and Metallica t-shirts, I'll leave the last word to James Hatfield: "Step a little closer if you please/ Blood will follow blood/ Dying time is here/ Damage Incorporated." Now, if someone can relate one of our professors to these lyrics, I'll burn them a copy of *The Black Album*, which I downloaded from Napster. Until then, I dub Square unforgiven. ■

"A man too busy to take care of his health is like a mechanic too busy to take care of his tools." - Spanish proverb



# Heather Reisman Saved My Sanity

by Claire Ezzeddin (LAW III)

## Heather Reisman Saved My Sanity

By Claire Ezzeddin (Law III)

Just after I started working at Chapters, Heather Reisman instituted a system that required employees to track their sales by handing each customer they served a bookmark marked with their employee number. The thought of having to approach strangers terrified me, and I started each shift filled with dread. I did, however, hand out many bookmarks. I may have been afraid of strangers, but I was more afraid of being fired.

Several periods of my life have been dominated by stress, fear and anxiety. Perhaps the worst years of all were my undergraduate years. I tend not to tell this story. It comes out in slivers, to which people respond with surprise. Sometimes in the law faculty, I pass people who walk with their heads down, who avoid my eyes. They make me think of myself as I used to be.

Arriving in Montreal at McGill at age 18 was a vault into adulthood for which I felt completely unprepared. I was lost. Everywhere, that is, other than in the classroom. In the academic sphere I knew what to do and felt safe, competent and valued. Over time, I retreated into my course work and

away from friendships. By second year, I had mastered a routine that allowed me to avoid people as much as possible. I walked to school staring at the sidewalk, listening to my walkman. I came home for lunch so that I would not have to eat with other people. I made myself so busy with course credits and structured extracurricular activities that I could not have time to go out to parties or to have a full social life with friends.

I lived a life of stress and anxiety that was driven by my fears (of failure, of the future, of social situations, of the world in general). I could justify my life to myself: I had to work hard to keep my entrance scholarship, I could not fail (a distinct possibility in science courses) and my written work was 'my passion,' necessitating hours of solitary thinking and obsessing. I did not know what I wanted to do after graduation, and I felt pressure to be involved and succeed at many things in order to 'keep my options open.' I knew that it was not good to be so busy and stressed out all of the time, but I managed to convince myself that I had no choice, that it was all out of my control.

The further I progressed in my degree, the worse things became. In fourth year, I suffered from writer's block and had trouble completing my assignments. I rarely socialized, and had few friends.

My social anxiety became so severe that I was afraid to leave my apartment to go to the grocery store. I was a total mess, and I knew it. Denial became impossible.

Graduate school was a comfortable respite (a safe, small, cozy, academic place) but I knew that I needed to challenge myself beyond the safety of academia to feel like a complete human being.

How did I overcome my shyness, stress, anxieties, and fears? I instinctively undertook a sort of overload therapy. I took two jobs that forced me to interact with people all day long: I worked at a bookstore and took a teaching position in a language program. I worked long hours seven days a week. For the first year, I felt like throwing up before every class I taught. I was certain I would get fired. At the bookstore, the client contact tracking system caused me excessive stress.

My "overload" approach drove me to a breaking point. I was in such a physical state of stress that my body felt like it was falling apart. I was exhausted all the time and suffered from a number of health problems. When I was a student, I had assumed that my stress was a function of a student's life—I had not anticipated that it would continue after graduation. Now, I could see that if I didn't do

something to change, stress and anxiety would rule me for a lifetime. Having reached such a rock bottom, my choice was simple: I had no choice. My life was only worth living if it was a different kind of life. I finally saw being stressed and anxious and working all hours of the day as options that I could opt out of.

At about the same time as this epiphany, I suffered another shift in my way of being in the world. After a year or so of teaching, I stopped feeling afraid on my way to work every morning. After two years, I was actually excited to meet my new students at the beginning of each semester. The lessening of my social anxieties made the world a very different place for me. Instead of a place to be feared, the social world opened up as a space of interesting people, stories and possibilities.

Through teaching, I also learned that there is much to be gained from risk and failure. My students who were afraid to risk making mistakes made little progress. I slowly became less afraid of failure, took more risks and learned to value my failures as evidence of courage and growth.

If I had applied to law school directly out of undergrad, I would have a different life and be a very different person. I suspect that my law GPA ▶



might have been higher, but I'm not sure that I could have made it through more than a year or two without a psychological collapse. I now realize that I was extremely lucky to find my way on my own without any kind of professional assistance. I don't know what would have happened to me if I hadn't followed my instincts to where Heather Reisman forced me to talk to strangers and to where I forced myself to face up to the destructive effects of stress and anxiety in my

life.

Second year law school was difficult for me. I overburdened myself and put a lot of pressure on myself. I was anxious. I was made even more anxious by the thought that this anxiety was a reversion to a past that I thought that I had left behind. It wasn't. In the intervening years, I had learned to draw strength from people around me and to build myself a loving network of friends who could pick me up when I was falling. I

had learned to better balance my time, to eat well and to get enough sleep, even in times of stress. I had learned to value myself for skills and strengths that could not be measured by my academic performance.

I had also lost my fear of asking for help. I went to McGill Counselling Services for an appointment. It was not easy, but I was incredibly proud of myself for going. I was in need, but less in need than I had been years before. I knew

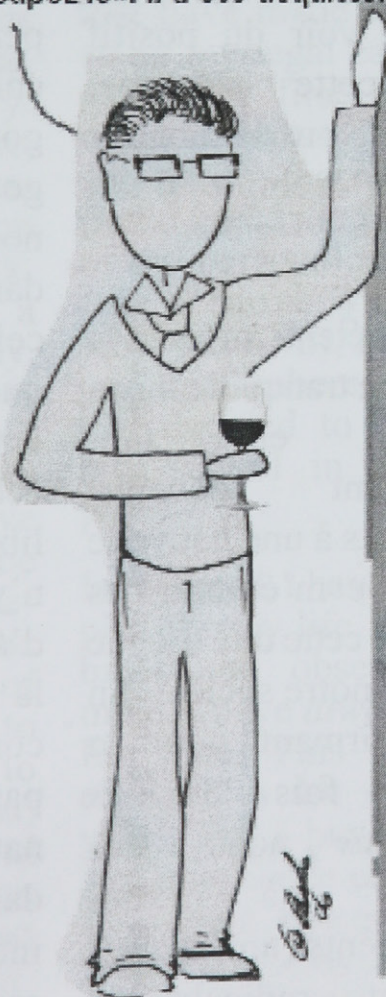
that at age 21 I never would have had the courage to reach out for help.

A few days later, one of my law professors made a light reference in class to his personal history of anxiety and depression. It was such a small thing, a mention in passing, but it was powerful for me. It was a confirmation that it was ok to have such a history and to tell such a story. ■

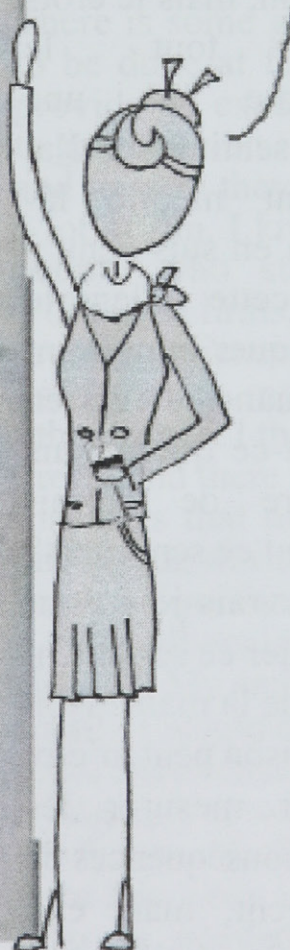
## Les aventures du capitaine Corporate America

by Laurence Bich-Carrière (Law III)

Des fois, quand tout est contre vous, il ne reste que l'humour. Alors, j'ai dit: «Et bien, si mon client est coupable, messieurs-dames les jurés, coupez-le». Il a été acquitté.



Sinéquanone, my dear, you know what? You put the *cute* in "prosecute".



Rapprochements heureux mais non facturables.  
Allez, un peu de sentimentalisme ne nuit pas.



# RÉPONSE À L'HALLUCINATION NATIONALISTE

by Olivier Gadoua (LAW II)

Dans son article paru dans le dernier *Quid Novi*, mon collègue et ami Léonid Sirota nous présente une image peu reluisante du nationalisme. En effet, il y voit une nouvelle drogue qui semble garder le commun des mortels dans une constante hallucination provoquée par des élites qui nous l'infusent à grandes doses pour servir les intérêts de la collectivité, le tout, au détriment de nos sacro-saintes libertés individuelles. J'espère, dans cet article, vous présenter l'idée du nationalisme sous un angle plus réaliste.

Premièrement, je crois que Léonid aborde le question du nationalisme d'une façon beaucoup trop rationnelle, voire mathématique, ce qui ne peut mener qu'à des conclusions, au mieux, mitigées à son sujet. Voici un exemple de phrases qui démontrent bien son approche très logico-rationnelle:

*Le nationalisme civique (...) souffre des mêmes vices de définition (...). À mon avis, cette*

*imprécision suffit à démontrer que l'idée de 'nation' est insensée. Un concept aussi fondamental ne saurait être défini avec un manque total de rigueur.*

À mon sens, ne présenter qu'une dimension rationnelle du concept de nationalisme ne nous permet pas de saisir sa pleine complexité et sa beauté. Certes le nationalisme comporte une dimension intelligible via la raison, mais je crois qu'avant tout le nationalisme est une affaire de sentiments. J'ai longuement médité là-dessus et j'en suis venu à élaborer cette allégorie pour expliquer mon point de vue: quand je suis en amour, est-ce que je suis en mesure de définir précisément ce sentiment? Non. Devrais-je pour autant rejeter ce sentiment du revers de la main? Non plus. La raison peut m'être utile pour mesurer les effets, les conséquences de ce sentiment, mais elle m'est plutôt inutile pour analyser son essence. Je pense donc qu'une analyse rationnelle du concept de nationalisme nous permet seulement d'en

comprendre les effets, les conséquences, mais on ne peut prétendre qu'elle nous permet de saisir son entière complexité.

Le nationalisme existe depuis des millénaires, et je trouve un peu optimiste l'idée de vouloir s'en débarrasser ainsi. Je crois qu'il est simplement naturel pour l'homme de chercher à s'identifier à un groupe plus large pour se définir. Je ne vois pas là un péché capital. J'arrive même à voir du positif dans cette drogue. J'entends vous le montrer avec l'exemple du Québec.

Léonid prétend qu'avec la révolution tranquille, nous sommes, en fait, simplement devenus dépendants à une nouvelle drogue. Je m'étonne des effets que cette dite drogue a eus sur notre société. En nous affirmant pour la première fois '*Maîtres Chez Nous*', nous avons procédé à des changements importants qui ont radicalement changé le visage de notre belle province. Ces changements me semblent bien concrets: laïcisation du système de santé et

d' é d u c a t i o n , démocratisation de ces systèmes, adoption de mesures visant la survie et la revitalisation du français, développement du réseau hydro-électrique, etc.

Pour terminer, j'aimerais exposer mon incompréhension du discours de mon ami sur le prétendu empiètement sur les libertés individuelles inévitable et inhérent à l'idée de nationalisme. Je pense qu'on ne doit pas confondre nationalisme et gouvernance. Les gouvernements dirigent au nom de la collectivité et dans le meilleur intérêt de celle-ci. Il est inévitable que dans leurs choix, les gouvernements viennent à écorcher au passage les libertés individuelles. Je n'y vois toutefois rien d'alarmant. J'y vois plutôt là l'essence même du contrat social. Je ne vois pas ce que l'idée de nationalisme vient faire dans le débat des libertés individuelles. Son texte semble suggérer que l'idée de nationalisme, même dans sa forme civique, signifie nécessairement l'assujettissement des libertés individuelles ▶



à l'intérêt collectif: "la souveraineté de la nation implique nécessairement que les droits de la per-

sonne seront assujettis aux droits collectifs."

J'invite mon ami Léonid à m'expliquer comment

le nationalisme québécois, par exemple, vient à nous brimer dans l'exercice de nos libertés

individuelles. ■

# THE SUNSHINE ARTICLE

by Alison Glaser (LAW II)

So today's Quid is about mental health and well-being. This is pretty much what I do in my article, so this theme comes naturally to me. Recent readers may be thinking: Uhhh, Ali, what the hell are you talking about? You don't talk about well being in your articles much. You babble about stolen cars and transsystemia, maybe once or twice you offer suggestions on how to study for finals, but seriously. Well to you I say: find some of last year's Quids. My articles were chock full of helpful advice to students on how to stay stress free. Here is a quick summary: take baths, eat chocolate, go out, drink (in moderation), get sleep (if you can't sleep, drink milk, change locations, read a book), and eat properly. But, see, the problem is that I wrote about all that stuff already. I can't write about it again! So I have tried to make my sunshine articles this year somewhat helpful (hence the ones about the myths of law school, how not to procrastinate, and how to stay sane during exams) but sometimes I fail and just end up writing about whatever is on my mind (hence articles about needing a break, stolen cars and transsystemia). Basically, I invoke my writer's privilege here. But now, see, the lovely Quid staffers want us to write about mental health and well-

being. Instantly I thought about lots of things I could write about, but then I thought, "dude, I have *so* already written about this" (and yes, I do in fact call myself dude in my own thoughts, so there). Which means that you will once again be subjected to some of my random musings, but there will be a mental well being message at the end, like the annoying little red guy on the old He-Man shows.

Two things of note have happened to me this week that have made me think about my legal career/life path. The first is that I went to visit a firm. The second is that, when a friend asked me for a copy of my personal statement (she is currently trying to write her own), I reread it and remembered why I had decided to come to law school in the first place.

In my head, I have a 5 year plan for my life. This is a bit of an obsession of mine. I have *always* had a life plan. This plan has changed a lot over the years, but I have always had one. Since coming to law school, however, I feel like I have been stuck in a weird limbo. I like things I didn't expect to like. I meet firms and stuff and have started considering working for them, which I never expected to do. See, the thing is, that some ca-

reer paths in law are just so *easy* that it seems natural to follow them. Now, please, do not in any way take this as a criticism of the school and its efforts to help us in our careers or to provide us with information about non-firm career paths. McGill is unique in how much information and support they provide in this respect, and I am grateful for it. Yet, how many of us came here wanting to change the world and then found ourselves going for large firm jobs? Again, I am not being critical here at all. There is some great work to be done at firms, they provide an excellent way to get hands-on experience and frankly they look like a lot of fun. I know many people who started off working at firms, got some great experience, and then used that to move on to other things. I think that is great. And there is nothing that says that one cannot change the world by working at a firm. Frankly, I am a small-scale world changer. My ambitions are small - I would rather help some individuals out than a huge group of people. I see that as valuable, just as I see that more large-scale help is needed on this planet. So no one says that you can't help anybody by working for a firm.

What I worry about for myself is that I find it is easy to forget about my

own personal ambitions that I had when I came to law school. I find myself in this weird space where I assume that I will go work for a firm or something (because, of course, I need to have a plan of some kind) but then that moves me away from what I originally wanted. I do not believe that the free food (and formerly wine) has seduced me to this idea. What I think has pulled me in that direction is that it is simple. And I like not having to work hard to deal with this stuff. In fact, I would much prefer if Ali in the CDO said to me: you know, you would be great as an XYZ lawyer and you should work at ABC place. That would make me supremely happy. No agonizing decisions, no obsessing about what I should do, and then bingo *I would have a plan* and my little obsessive compulsive brain will be satisfied. Sadly, this will not happen, so I have to figure it out for myself. This sucks.

When I visited the law firm, I found it beautiful, the people were incredibly friendly, but I didn't feel inspired by the kind of work they do. But here is the thing: *all firms do the same kind of work*. So now what am I supposed to do? Do I suck it up for a few years? Maybe. Do I try it out and see if eventually I actually will like it, ►



which many people assure me will happen? I don't know. So once again, I found myself in this weird mental space where I suddenly felt very unsure about my future, and of course this makes me incredibly nervous.

Then I reread my personal statement. I have to say, it was actually quite a shock. I had, in some ways, forgotten that this was what I had wanted to gain from law school. Because, of course, in my personal statement I talked about what my plan for the future was. But in re-reading it, I realized something: I still wanted what I had originally said! In my statement, I mentioned that what I really wanted to do with my law degree is somehow combine my background in psychology with law. I wanted to work in some way to help psy-

chologists or patients deal with the legal system, or maybe work in policy somehow. And when I reread that, I realized that I still want that. I had sort of forgotten after being here for a year and a half and discovering that I love torts and contracts and crim. And of course, because going off to work for a firm is so easy, I started to think, hey, maybe I'll do that. And maybe I will. I don't know. But what I do know, now, is that I need to seriously work out what I want with my life, what I find important, and then go after it.

So, time for the well-being part. I think a lot of us are stressed about our futures. We like to think of law school as a process in and of itself and not a means to an end (believe me, I *love* school. If I could stay here forever, I would be a

happy camper), but at some point we have to face the fact that we need a job. Not just a job, actually, but a career. This time in our lives is a huge transition, a time of great personal growth and change. If most of you are like me (and from what I hear, I think you are) this kind of stuff is scary. And overwhelming. And hard, because we like being in control, we like having plans. So I challenge all of you - reread your personal statements. Read about what you were passionate about before you came here. Then think about what you find exciting now that you are here. Make yourself a list of what, in life, you need to achieve to maximize your personal well-being. I think everyone here is incredible and so you should have no trouble achieving your dreams if you want

to. Then maybe this whole transition won't seem so overwhelming and scary. See, my thinking is that even though I don't know what I'm going to do and how I am going to do it, at least I have a goal to work towards, and that means I have a plan and that makes me happy. This way, we can try and enjoy law school as much as possible, since every new thing we decide we love gets added to the list. Then, we can reduce the after law stress that we all feel, because our search will be more focused, more directed toward something we truly want. And then, if we end up doing something that touches on all of the things that we love, I cannot think of anything more personally fulfilling. How much better could our subjective mental health be then to have achieved one's goals? ■

# LAW LIMERICK X

## BY FRANCIE GOW

### (LAW III)

THOUGH YOU SAY THAT YOU'RE MENTALLY DRAINED

IT'S NOT LAW THAT IS FRYING YOUR BRAIN

HINT: YOU NOW SPEND YOUR DAYS  
HANGING OUT WITH TYPE A'S  
THAT WOULD DRIVE ANYBODY INSANE!

## Legal Sonnet II

by Stephanie Jones  
(Law II)

Law school is good at making me feel stupid.

I'll read a few pages per hour, head hurting

(It being assumed without, of course, decided

Somehow reading should contribute to learning).

I'll listen to a prof - the words make sense

Alone, if not together (I daren't ask,

"I don't understand. Please explain the sentence."

Maybe what I need's a remedial class).

I'll forget to forget my GPA.

Meaningless, arbitrary grades may be,

Points on a curve (or target range), they say -

How did these ones come to belong to me?

I did once get an A - with a comment

Of "Very good - just short of excellent."

*(Coming soon: How law school, and other things, are good at reminding me I'm not actually stupid, and other things)*



# THE THREE "E"'S - PRESERVING/PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT EXAM TIME

By Gillian Kerr & Aryana Rousseau (Well-Being Committee)

During busy times, our priorities often shift. At exam times, many of us tend to focus all of our energy on studying; believing that studying constantly will help us to achieve "success". But when we neglect our body and spirit, we are not at our best. Though we should study diligently during exam periods, we should also try to maintain balance in our lives. Recognizing that this can be difficult, we have highlighted the "three Es" that we believe deserve prioritization during the exam period

## 1. Eating Well - Eating Smart

"Cook? Pack my Lunch? Who has time for that? I'll just grab some fast food and get back to the library."

Eating greasy, high-fat food is not good for studying. After eating such a meal, you'll likely fall asleep on your books. Skipping meals is even more dangerous. Not only will you be lacking in energy, but you'll also have a difficult time focusing on your work or absorbing what you're reading. Instead of eating out, try packing your lunch, and try to bring some healthy snacks along with you too. Here are some Ideas:

### *Easy to Pack Lunches*

Try cooking big meals at night. Take the leftovers to school & have a healthy (and inexpensive!) lunch.

Organic, All-natural Peanut Butter (PB) and Banana Sandwiches on Wholegrain Bread provide an excellent source of energy. Many people avoid PB, fearing that it's too high in fat. That avoidance is misguided - PB is one of the "good" fats!

Make big batches of Tuna or egg salad, to save "sandwich-making time". If you'd like to cut back on trans-fats, mix the tuna with mustard and a bit of olive oil instead of mayonnaise.

Buy fresh bread, nice cheese and sliced meats or meat alternatives and assemble your sandwich at school.

### *Healthy, Energy-Rich Snacks*

Nuts are a great source of energy. Try keeping some mixed, unsalted nuts or trailmix in your locker. They'll be sure to come in handy during late study sessions when Pino's has closed.

Dina Merhbi, a Dietician-Nutritionist at McGill, recommends combining one sugar source (such as fruit)

with a protein source (such as dairy products, or meat & meat alternatives). The sugar source will give you instant energy, and the protein will help to spread your blood sugar levels to give you energy later.

Instead of buying flavoured yogurt (which has preservatives and high sugar content), add flavour to plain yogurt with fruit. Or pour some maple syrup on top.

Prepare baggies full of cut vegetables: carrots, celery, green/red/orange pepper, beans, snow peas, etc. They'll provide a fast, healthy, and inexpensive snack.

## 2. Exercise

During exam times, many of us are unwilling to sacrifice any study time for exercise. This may not be a wise strategic decision. Daily exercise will give you energy, help you to focus, and likely keep your spirits up. If you can't find a way to fit your regular exercise routine into your schedule, try some of these ideas:

Rather than taking the bus or driving to school, walk or ride your bike instead. The fresh air and increased heartbeat will wake you up better than any cup of coffee can!

Try combining your "social breaks" with a physical activity. Work-out with a friend, or take a walk up the mountain. Exercise and time with a friend: it's a win-win situation.

After hours in front of a laptop, almost everyone will feel the principle of diminishing marginal utility. Your study sessions will be more effective if you take short breaks, have a walk, and get your heart rate up.

## 3. Emotional Awareness

Exam periods shouldn't crush your spirits - don't let them. Try to make the period as pleasant as possible. Here are some ideas:

Study group sessions should be helpful, not stressful. Form study groups with people with whom you work well, and who bring you up rather than bring you down.

Make some "you time". You may have to cut back on your favourite pastimes during the exam period, but don't sacrifice them completely.

Be honest with yourself. If you feel stressed or worried, don't try to suppress it. Talk about how you feel. Often, just saying things out loud relieves half the burden we're feeling.



Remember that there are lots of well-being resources - people are here to help you. Refer to the "List of Well-Being Resources" in the Bogenda, speak to a trusted friend,

colleague or professor.

You can always contact us at [wellbeing.mcgill@gmail.com](mailto:wellbeing.mcgill@gmail.com).

You're never alone! ■

Don't Worry,  
Be Happy!

# THE MUSINGS OF A SNAIL

by Olga Lifchits (SNAIL)

The slimy trail that I leave on the checkered floor of the law library's elevator and the surfaces of the stairs is the only clue that I'm a snail. Well, that and my shapeless mucous body underneath a spiral calcium carbonate shell. But I happen to look exactly like one law student in this school - one might even say we are identical twins. And this, so far, has thankfully diverted the suspicious looks and kept my shell intact from the accidental squashing by the steel-toed shoes of the real law students (I am quite certain that it is a requirement to wear those to law school. I mean, what if a structure collapsed right onto a glass hallway?). In fact, our similarity has prompted several other law students to engage in animated discussions of their courses and the LSA elections with me, all the while being completely

oblivious to the gunk I was leaving all over their backpacks, attempting to crawl to the exit. But even though I couldn't care less about the rules that govern oral *inter vivos* gifts in common law or any other law-related jazz, the law students can rejoice that every week I religiously read The Quid, cover to cover. It is true, the Quid does make an excellent read when I drink my evening tea or when I ride the morning bus ride to the Université de Montréal. From it, I learn about many issues that besiege the turbulent life of a law student - for example, how to feel good about life, still find time for social activities while being bombarded by readings and midterms and how to take it easy among the inevitable competition. At first, I read these things with neutral amusement, but slowly, the matters of

how much booze should be allowed at the Coffeehouses crept into my heart and stirred real emotions in my snail cerebral ganglion. And having never been to the law school orientation, it suddenly became important to me, what the hell happened to grab bags full of law-related stuff at Orientation? And what's with the LSA not consulting me, yes, you heard it - me personally - a snail - about changing the rules of the Coffeehouse?? After taking a cold bath in a glass of ginger beer to cool off the overheated cerebral nerve knot, I realized that these emotions must be caused by something that is sincerely dear to me... but what? Was it the idea of a law school, with all its unreadable readings, peppered with unpronounceable Latin terms about Lord-judges uttering pure brilliance?

Or maybe it was something as simple as the cozy building of the Faculty of Law that draws many other gastropods with its warmth and comfort? Or was it the need to get away from my own field of study and read about law school as if it were a captivating sitcom? I'm beginning to think it's the latter. So all you overstressed law students, looking for things to do "just do get away from it all" - I say, get to know the other departments! On spare time, look into a few structures of organic molecules, maybe calculate the heat of enthalpy or two. Do a Fourier transform, solve a differential equation. Meanwhile, keep busy with the Quid and all your life struggles. It makes my evening teas so much more exciting. ■

## A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO RELAXATION

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The Exercise

comfortable.

This technique can be used at your desk, on public transit or sitting just about anywhere. Feel free to close your eyes if you feel

First, push your feet into the floor for about ten seconds and then relax and direct your attention to the soles of your feet. Try to

feel the floor through your feet. If your mind wanders, try to focus on this exercise. Relax and give your mind a rest.

Next, bring your attention

to your breathing. When you breath, your abdomen should rise and fall with each breath and your shoulders should remain relatively still. Try to slow down your breathing ►



and take long, thorough, complete breaths in through your nose and then exhale very, very slowly through the mouth. Focus your attention on trying to feel your breath as it flows in and out. Feel the coldness of your breath as you inhale and the warmth as you exhale. Sitting up straight, breath in

and out very slowly. Do this three times. Next, move your head slowly to the left, back to centre, slowly to the right, back to centre. Pause a few seconds and breath in and out very slowly. Do four more complete cycles.

This whole exercise will take you about six to eight

minutes. You can do fewer cycles if you have less time. You will find that your mental energy and overall concentration are greatly improved after you have done the exercise. Try to do the full exercise twice per day.

Remember that the real secret to stress management

is understanding that no one else will do it for you. If you are waiting for others to give you a little time for yourself, or to reduce their expectations of you, or to plan your life for you, you will still be waiting at this time next year. ■

## THE LAWYER'S PERSONAL TOOLBOX

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### Laughter

The first trick to a happy life is to laugh a lot. Laughing reduces stress, improves your immune system and reduces anxiety and tension in your body. People will like you more. People will trust you more. People will want to be with you and the people who want to be with you are the sort of people you would like to be with.

### Exercise

Keep active and make sure you get exercise every day. It doesn't have to be anything dramatic: you can take a 10, 20 or 30 minute walk everyday, often with little change in the rest of your life. Try biking, swimming, walking, gymnastics, competitive sports, gardening. Do something every day.

### Sex

Have sex with someone you love. It is no secret

that sex is fun, exciting, fulfilling, relaxing - and it burns calories!

### Outdoors

Spend time out-of-doors everyday. This can easily tie in with your daily physical workout. Going outside can change your perspective and can improve your mood. Be it a walk through the park, a stroll through your neighbourhood, a jog, or a bike ride, it can be refreshing and renewing to be outside in the fresh air, no matter the weather.

### Sunshine

We need sun on our bodies for physical health. A little sun every day restores vitamin D and brings a whole army of health benefits. "A little sun" means about twenty minutes of direct sun contact or longer using sun protection. We all have to be aware of the dangers of

overexposure to the sun.

### Do what you like

Seriously ask yourself what you really like in life. Is it reading? Music? A weekly bird walking trek through a park? Several canoe trips a year? Whatever it is, make sure you do it. If possible, do more of it. Keep your mind open. Be willing to learn new things and explore new activities. If you have an interest in something, read about it and learn about it. Remember to use your imagination and to use your mind.

### Keep in Touch

Keep in touch with the people who are important to you. We cannot choose our families, but we can choose our friends. In my experience, friends often make the best families. You have to invest in them and that investment will pay off for the rest of your

life. Every day of the week, make sure you talk to a friend. If the day is almost over and your schedule hasn't given you the opportunity, get out your personal address book and look for someone who would like to hear from you. Send an e-mail, a post-card or a short note. It's a great personal habit and a great way to keep in touch.

### Dogs

In my experience, the greatest source of unconditional, unlimited, perfect love and acceptance is to have a relationship with a dog. Who else will get so excited every time they see you? Who else will forget that you were cranky this morning and overlook the fact that you are exhausted tonight? Who else will want to go for a walk or have a cuddle? Who else will be happy with the dinner ▶



## QUID NOVI

you serve? Dogs are wonderful.

If you can't fit a pet into your busy schedule, try to borrow one! Many of my friends have a surrogate relationship with my dogs and visit them often. If dogs are not your favourite, live with a cat or a bird or any other living thing to add joy to your life.

### Help Others

One of the best ways to build value in our lives is to find a way to give to others in our community. There is an old saying that we get to keep the happiness we have by giving it away. There are so many opportunities to help others, you can choose something that works for you.

### Relationships

Keep good habits in your

important personal relationships. Invest, renew and maintain the health and vitality of your connections with your significant others. Special effort can produce special results! Remember the magic when you were first dating. Try to honour the value and special place your spouse has in your life. For example, schedule a weekly or monthly date with your spouse and

be sure it's something you both enjoy and value.

### Be grateful

On a daily basis, remind yourself of the things you have to be grateful for. An attitude of gratitude can make a huge difference in your day and the way you treat those around you. Learn to want what you have, rather than wanting to have. ■

# WELL-BEING IS FOR EVERYONE

BY KARA MORRIS (LAW III, LSA PRESIDENT)

I'd like to thank the editorial staff of the Quid for once again participating in well-being initiatives at the faculty. The Quid has been a great supporter of well-being initiatives in the faculty from the beginning. Thank you also to the Well-being committee, especially the chairs Aryana and Gillian, for keeping well-being on the agenda, and doing so in a very proactive way this year.

Student well-being is an important concern for all

students, whether they feel themselves to be "well" or not. The overall strength of our student body depends on the strength of each individual. Some students need more support than others, and it is hoped that through special issues of the quid such as this one, students who are struggling with wellness issues will realize that their concerns are not isolated, and that other law students live similar experiences. Additionally, the quid special issue highlights information on the

support structures available to students at McGill that can help those who need them to cope.

One of the primary goals of the well-being initiative last year was to get people talking and thinking about wellness issues. Through this year's committee, I think students have been thinking about such issues since the beginning of September. It may not stop many of us from turning into "stress-balls" in mid-November, but hopefully when such a thing hap-

pens, we have a better idea of where to go for help if we need it.

I feel one of the keystones to personal well-being is balance. I hope this issue of the Quid helps you to examine the balance in your life, and prompts you to make any changes that will help in this regard.

The LSA Executive and Council hopes you enjoy this special well-being issue of the Quid. Good luck on exams, keep well, and stay balanced. ■

# ON ULCERS, EXECUTIVE MONKEYS AND HEALTH

By Owen Ripley (Law I)

Three weeks ago I lay in a hospital bed on the fifteenth floor of the Montreal General. The diagnosis: a gastric ulcer.

Over the course of a week, I had lost half of my blood internally before finally passing out and being "forcefully persuaded" by

friends to go to the hospital. The following five days were spent undergoing endless tests and procedures, including a blood

transfusion, a G-scope, a C-scope and a Barium follow-through. While these procedures may appear useful for a ▶



rudimentary review of the alphabet and the periodic elements, they were slightly discomfoting to say the least. The *Quid's* call for articles relating to "mental health and well-being" provides me with the ideal opportunity to rant about my experience, clear up some common misconceptions about ulcers and offer some unsolicited musings about health and wellness.

At the age of twenty-two, I was apparently a bit of an anomaly to the staff of the Montreal General. Apparently young people typically do not get peptic ulcers (i.e. ulcers appearing in the gastrointestinal tract), although my roommate quickly reassured me that her aunt suffered one at the age of nine! Through my experience in the emergency room, it did not take me long to learn that a

law student's lifestyle may be particularly conducive to ulcers:

"Do you drink a lot of coffee?" Um, yes...

"Do you drink a lot of red wine?" Define "a lot."

"Do you eat spicy foods?" Please, who doesn't in Montreal?

"Do you take aspirin or ibuprofen?" Just with breakfast...

Exaggerations aside, some of my regular habits were soon suspect. My doctors believe it was the latter practice that may have been partially responsible for my episode. Ulcers can be worsened or even caused by aspirin or other anti-inflammatory drugs. Aspirin, coffee, red wine and Thai food notwithstanding, in approximately 75% of cases ulcers are caused by a bacterial in-

fection known as *Helicobacter Pylori*. Interestingly, *Helicobacter Pylori* is found in the stomachs of about three-quarters of the population, yet less than 10% will develop ulcers. Complicating statistical analyses is that 10-20% of ulcer patients do not have a *Helicobacter Pylori* infection. Enter the pink elephant in this article: stress. The linkage between peptic ulcers and stress (hence law school?) remains hotly contested. Colloquially, stress and ulcers still go hand in hand. My mother was the perfect example. A tirade of motherly moralism didn't take long to surface once she got over the shock that her son was in the hospital: "You do too much. Between working, law school, and other commitments, you are working yourself to death. Do the doctors think it's stress-re-

lated? When are you cutting back your hours at work?" To some extent, however, my dear old Mum was correct. Even after the discovery of *Helicobacter Pylori* in the 1980s, many experts still contend that ulcers have an inherently psychological component to them. Stress, they argue: a) can impair bodily responses to an ulcer; and b) may stimulate the production of gastric acid, worsening an existing ulcer. Although the correlation between stress and peptic ulcers has not been directly proven, it should be seen as a cofactor to *Helicobacter Pylori*. It is increasingly unlikely that a bacterial infection is a monocausal explanation of peptic ulcers. Considering this is an issue on mental health and well-being, I could launch my own tirade of ►



moralism: get lots of sleep, eat healthy, do what makes you happy, etc. I won't. Instead, I will tell you what affected me the most in the hospital (and I admit it is somewhat cliché): a reminder of how blessed I am. My first two nights at the hospital were spent in the excruciating cramped discomfort of the emergency room (perhaps my next submission will be on the sad state of the MGH's infrastructure), after which I was moved up to short-term stay. I shared a room with three other gentlemen: one was likely in his 70s and was expected to die within the month of lung cancer; the second was in his 60s and had serious contusions all over his body; the last was a younger man (probably late 30s, early 40s) who had been in our sterile hospital room for over two months and appeared to be suffering from muscular degeneration. I was humbled by how blessed I was: my stay lasted five days; I had daily visitors; and ultimately, my affliction was relatively minor. Suffice it to say, it helped me to put law school in perspective.

I will close this submission by relating a study known as the "executive monkey study" (note: these studies remain highly controversial). The study involved two monkeys, each of whom received an electrical shock every twenty seconds. One of the monkeys - the executive monkey - was given the means to stop the shock to both monkeys by pressing a lever. He unceremoniously developed a peptic ulcer and died, while his partner did not. The most dramatic results from the study were obtained when six hours of shocks were followed by six hours of rest (eerily similar to a day at law school or the office, non?). So, did stress kill the executive monkey? That ladies and gentlemen, remains to be seen... ■

## WELL - BEING QUOTE

### Everything Depends on Your Steps

The seed of mindfulness is in each of us, but we usually forget to water it. We think that happiness is only possible in the future – when we get a house, a car, a Ph.D. We struggle in our mind and body, and we don't touch the peace and joy that are available right now – the blue sky, the green leaves, the eyes of our beloved.

What is most important? Many people have passed exams and bought houses and cars, yet they are still unhappy. What is most important is to find peace and to share it with others. To have peace, you can begin by walking peacefully. Everything depends on your steps.

From *The Long Road Turns to Joy: A Guide to Walking Meditation* by Thich Nhat Hanh





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# LAW SCHOOL IS A CESSPOOL OF INSECURITY (GROSS GENERALIZATIONS TO FOLLOW)

By Tara Bognar (LAW III)

I love this school, my teachers, and especially my classmates. I think you all are amazing and inspiring. And yet somehow we make this place crazy. This is my theory:

Why do we come to law school? Because we're insecure and probably scared. Not universally, maybe, but in higher proportions and to a higher

degree than most.

If we had guts, many of us would go straight into entrepreneurship, grad school, activism, or whatever it is that really interests us. But no, we want low risk: a prestigious, respectable degree that almost guarantees us (at least) a comfortable income and an entrée into wherever it is we'd like to

end up.

We're not only insecure in our fears about the future but also in our feelings of confidence about the present. We became eligible to study for this degree by becoming really good at molding ourselves and our work to get the approval of teachers and test markers in the past, probably starting with elementary

school and not letting up till now. In the process we became more and more dependent on outside recognition to make us feel adequate. Our sense of confidence and success is always hanging on the next report card, job offer, or selection process, and there's always another one looming after this one.

And then we get here ►



and with all our kindness and good intentions, somehow our collective insecurity pools and swells and we manage to completely unintentionally scare the shit out of ourselves and each other. What's worse, seeing our classmates' successes often only fuels our own fears about our adequacy. This is a bad situation and I'm not sure what can be done about it, since it stems from who we are before we even came here. Personally I've found that constructing a sense of self

and confidence apart from official recognition has been next to impossible.

Every time I think I've done it, some other rejection comes in and I feel little and scared again. The whole process makes me dispirited and makes it harder for me to concentrate on the things I'm meant to be learning, which *would* be really interesting and engaging if only my ego didn't hang on them. Somewhere along the line, it started to

feel safer to hold part of myself back from my engagement in class, just enough so that when the bad grade or rejection comes in, I can tell myself it doesn't *really* reflect on me because I wasn't really trying, I started at the last minute, etc. I can't express how much I hate this! It's weak and self destructive, even if it *feels* safer, and it makes me question aspects of me I used to take for granted, like my love of learning.

Law school has been extremely challenging for me at this really personal level. Yet I do really love it here - the faculty, the profs, and my classmates. I hoped that naming this phenomenon would help me contextualize my fears and ground myself. I also hope I'm not completely wrong in my generalizations about my classmates and that maybe this reflection will be helpful for others. ■

### The Story of Two Dudes & their Solitudes:

*Dude from Red Deer, AB: "Gawd, not again with this! No way would I let Quebec be a nation cuz they already get all these rights and stuff."*

*Mec d'Alma (QC): « Les Canadiens ne sont même pas un peuple car ils ne partagent pas ni la même langue ni la même religion, et sais-tu qu'à Toronto on enseigne aux étudiants que Louis*

*Riel était un traître ! Et apparemment on forme la même nation avec eux? »*

## **Do Quebecers form a Nation?**

## **Do Canadians form a Nation?**

### **If so, can a Quebec nation and a Canadian nation exist within one state called Canada?**

*Come with your views to the next*

## **Moderated Roundtable Discussion** *of the Canadian Constitutional Club.*

**Mercredi 22 novembre**

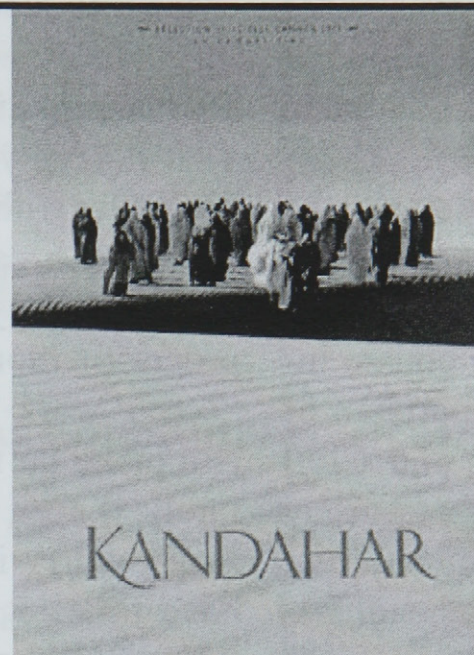
**17 h 30**



NOVEMBER 21, 2006

THE HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP &  
THE CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND LEGAL PLURALISM PRESENT...

# "From Canada to Kandahar: Afghanistan pre- and post-9/11"



## WITH NELOFER PAZIRA STAR OF THE FILM KANDAHAR

~ Ms. PAZIRA WILL DISCUSS HER EXPERIENCES WITH THE AFGHAN PEOPLE AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN. CLIPS OF THE AWARD-WINNING FILM KANDAHAR WILL ALSO BE SCREENED.

*AFGHAN-CANADIAN JOURNALIST/FILMMAKER, NELOFER PAZIRA, ARRIVED IN CANADA IN 1990 WHEN SHE WAS 17. SHE OBTAINED DEGREES IN JOURNALISM AND ENGLISH LITERATURE, AN MA IN ANTHROPOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY & RELIGION, AND RECEIVED AN HONORARY DOCTORATE OF LAWS. SHE PLAYED THE LEAD IN THE MOVIE KANDAHAR, WHICH WAS BASED ON HER PERSONAL STORY, HAS MADE TWO DOCUMENTARIES ABOUT IRAN, AND CO-PRODUCED AND CO-DIRECTED RETURN TO KANDAHAR. MS. PAZIRA HAS JUST SET UP A LITERACY PROGRAM FOR WOMEN IN BAMİYAN. SHE IS ALSO A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO CBC.*

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22ND  
6:00 PM NEW CHANCELLOR DAY HALL, ROOM 101, 3660 PEEL



# HOW TO STUDY FOR EXAMS

Compiled by the Student Well-being Committee

The following is a list of study tips from upper-year students at McGill Law Faculty. *Caveat emptor*: Please note that everyone has a different study strategy. We are not claiming that following these tips will guarantee success.

Make flowcharts (mini summaries) after each sub-heading. If the course involves a comparison of Common Law and Civil Law, place these side by side under the different 'transsystemic' headings. By doing this, you will see the big picture, while keeping the details in check. Should any difficulties in understanding come up – immediately email the prof with any questions. From my experience, all the profs are very accessible, as they take the time to respond to emails and keep an open door policy.

In the few days preceding an exam, work on old exam questions in small groups. It helps to focus ideas, it allows for sharper learning (several brains are better than one) and, perhaps most importantly, it breaks the loneliness and passivity usually involved in studying for exams.

When I did this with friends, it often turned into an impromptu potluck.

Break up the day into hours. Set one (reasonable) goal per hour, as in a chapter or exercise.

Take lots of small breaks. That'll keep you studying for longer without burning out. Big breaks are the problem. They add to the procrastination mentality: "I can work faster later and make up for it." That rarely, if ever, works.

Don't worry if you don't have time to read everything. Teachers tend to assign in-depth reading on a variety of topics, but come exam time, they are only looking for a general understanding of all the topics and the way in which the topics connect with one another. Skim the readings, ensuring that all the fundamental points are understood, and that the details are left in your notes. If it's an open book exam, the details can be looked in the rare case that you are actually asked about them. Think big picture.

Don't get hung up on any one topic. It'll just cause you to fall behind. Get as much a grasp of the fundamental principles as you

can, then flag the topic, and move on. If you have time later, come back to it. Get exercise and stretch. The latter, in addition to a decent amount of sleep, will go a long way to keeping your energy levels up.

Get fresh air. Surprisingly, this was rare for me during exam times. Libraries and basements tend to consume students, and fresh air and daylight can soon become non-existent from one day to the next.

November and December are some of the darkest months of the year. Getting little sun exposure can really dampen your mood. If the sun comes out, go outside and soak it up while you can.

Organizing your notes is one of the best ways to go over material without even trying. I go through my notes with my course outline and try to put in all the headings and subheadings (after the fact). This way you go over all the topics, and if you've done it right, Word will then be able to make you a table of contents so that notes are easily indexed for open-book exams.

I do up a list of "case triggers" – case names with a

short sentence after them to remind what the case was about, and maybe what it stood for / was used for subsequently. This works really well if you have read all or most of the cases. I do the same for codal articles (or "key" codal articles) so they are easy to index.

I catch up on readings just before exam time. I find that after having attended classes, it's easier to speed-read cases/doctrine. So to finish exam prep I try to do all the readings I haven't done during the term.

I like to study on my own because I need to work at my own pace, whether that is fast or slow for the material. I find that time is wasted in groups when I'm in a focused mindset. I don't use other peoples' summaries. It can be helpful to clarify a concept or two, but usually it's much more beneficial to process the material in your own way.

I am a fourth year. I have overcome the dreadful stress of exam time with meditation and change of attitude. I meditate to clear my mind of all worldly pressures, for example the pressure of being a ▶



great student/lawyer to please my ego and the egos of my family, friends, etc. It gets easier with practice. I have also worked hard to eliminate my competitiveness and comparisons to others, which is no easy task at law school where such behavior is the norm. I now compete with myself to become a truly good lawyer, effective and kind. It was not easy but I have been able to eliminate my

bad behavior and related stress. With a good attitude, the work is just work that has to be done. It can even become a pleasure to learn and work with the law.

Don't let school become your life. Have something or someone that helps you escape the world of torts and contracts when you need a break. This person can be a romantic partner, old friend, family member, community or faith leader

or your cat. These people are your support network if you're doubting yourself or if you just need to talk about something besides cases. You will be a better student if you maintain perspective and remember your priorities.

Don't feel like you have to reinvent the wheel. You can use other people's summaries as a resource when making your own. Sometime reading over someone else's summary

can give you different insights into how the cases weave together. Consider them like another study resource. However, keep in mind that they may have errors so be sure to compare them to your own notes.

Stay positive. Tell yourself that you will be alright, regardless of what mark you get. Worrying about your marks will only take your energy and time away from studying. ■

## START YOUR DAY THE WELL-BEING WAY

By Aryana Rousseau (Law II, for the Student Well-Being Committee)

Uh oh. It is happening. The semester is heating up. I'm starting to see that glazed look in the eyes of my fellow students. Let's all breathe for a moment before panicking. In honor of your impending stress, I have prepared a three-step Student Well-Being program to help you start your day well.

**Step one:** Wake up refreshed. Okay, so this step actually starts the night before. It is really important to get enough sleep. The experts say that 7 to 8 hours is best; but you know your body best. I feel best after 9 hours of sleep, so I try to get to bed by 11pm or midnight. To ensure a good night's sleep, avoid drinking coffee after noon and get some exercise the day before.

**Step two:** Eat a good breakfast. Yes, you've heard this one before too. But I cannot stress enough how important it is. If you skip breakfast, you'll likely be hungry by the time you get to school and you'll make an unhealthy choice, like a muffin or brownie.

Easy breakfast foods include cereal, whole-grain toast, fruit and yogurt. My secret to breakfast success is homemade granola. I know, you are thinking, How hippie-child can she get? But even preppy law students can do this! Store-bought cereals are expensive and lack nutritional value. In fact, a recent *Globe and Mail* article revealed findings that some breakfast cereals contain the same nutritional content as a Mars

bar. Gross!

Homemade granola is inexpensive and easy to make. It is very portable and full of nutritional goodness. Plus you can tailor your granola to your taste (ie. no yucky raisin for me)! Please find my granola recipe at the end of this article.

**Step three:** Get some exercise. The easiest way to do this in the morning is to walk to school. In first year, I spent the first two months of school taking the bus and/or metro. It took about 30 minutes and I would inevitably arrive stressed out from the rush and the crowds of the people. Then I realized that I could walk to school in just 40 minutes. Now I walk over the mountain every day. Walking is

meditative and gives me time to think about things. I arrive to school refreshed and ready to concentrate.

Other ways to get the blood flowing in the morning are to go for a run, do some yoga, walk your dog or cycle to school. By incorporating a little bit of activity into your everyday schedule, you'll look and feel much better.

There you have it: three easy steps to starting your day well. I encourage you to consciously focus on your Well-Being. Make wellness a part of your daily routine right now. You'll thank yourself for it someday soon. ■



## Granola Recipe

Combine in a large bowl:  
8 cups organic large flake  
oats  
1 cup oat bran (or spelt  
flakes)  
3/4 cup flour (or spelt  
flour)

1/2 tsp salt  
1 1/2 tsp cinnamon  
1 cup light oil (canola,  
peanut, safflower)  
1 cup maple syrup (use  
less if you want it less  
sweet)  
Spread onto two large

pans. Bake 30 min at 325  
degrees, stirring thor-  
oughly after 15 min. (Re-  
duce to 300 degrees if it  
gets too brown or burns).

Add 2 to 4 cups of  
chopped nuts (walnuts, al-  
monds, pecans, cashews),

seeds (sunflower, flax,  
sesame) and shredded  
unsweetened coconut.  
Bake for additional 15 min  
until brown.

Let cool and add 1/2 cup  
each raisins and dried  
cranberries. ■

# CONFÉRENCE : L'APPLICATION PERVERSE DU SYSTÈME DE JUSTICE DANS LE CAS DE L'ITINÉRANCE

**LE MARDI 21 NOVEMBRE 2006 À 18H**  
**MOOT COURT – TRIBUNAL ÉCOLE**  
**FACULTÉ DE DROIT DE MCGILL**  
**3644 RUE PEEL, MONTRÉAL**

Accès Équité vous  
présente sa conférence  
d'automne sur la  
judiciarisation de  
l'itinérance à Montréal.  
Vous rappelez-vous des  
photos ? L'utilisation  
croissante des règlements  
municipaux contre les  
incivilités a des  
répercussions alarmantes  
sur la qualité de vie des  
personnes itinérantes,  
ayant pour effet  
d'accumuler chez eux une  
dette judiciaire qui  
contribue à les  
marginaliser. Comment en  
sommes-nous arrivés ici ?  
Comment inverser la  
vapeur ?

Nos conférenciers nous  
présenteront la  
problématique de façon  
générale de même que la  
stratégie juridique mise en  
place par le milieu  
communautaire pour y  
faire face. L'appui du  
grand public est urgent  
pour faire cesser cette  
situation inacceptable,  
celui des étudiants de droit  
qui connaissent le système  
en détail précieux.

Le groupe Pro Bono  
UQÀM, le Comité  
d'Action Sociale de la  
faculté de droit de  
l'Université de Montréal,

des étudiants en travail  
social, en technique  
policière et de nombreux  
i n t e r v e n a n t s  
communautaires sont  
invités.

Une discussion suivra à  
Thomson House.

## Au programme :

Témoignage d'Alex  
«Gadget» Berthelot

Présentation d'une étude  
sur la judiciarisation de la  
population itinérante à  
Montréal de 1994 à 2004.  
Prof. Céline Bellot,

Centre international de  
criminologie comparée,  
Université de Montréal

État des lieux et actions  
concrètes entreprises par  
le milieu. Isabelle  
Raffestin et Bernard St-  
Jacques, Réseau d'aide  
aux personnes seules et  
itinérantes de Montréal  
(RAPSIM)

Analyse et critique des  
moyens utilisés pour  
traiter les problèmes  
sociaux de la  
marginalisation et de  
l'itinérance. Prof.  
Roderick Macdonald,  
Titulaire de la Chaire F.R.



Scott en droit public et interventions se  
constitutionnel, Université dérouleront en français, Pour informations :  
McGill. mais les questions sont <http://www.legaloutreach.mcgill.ca>  
N.B.: Toutes les langues. Courriel :

# Histoires amusantes de la semaine

Selected by Julien Morissette (LAW III), for the Well-Being issue

## Relations parentales des avocats:

**Le père à son fils :** « Je te donne une orange. » **L'avocat à son fiston :** « Avis est par les présentes donné que je, maître papa, donne, cède, concède, vends, remets, transmets, transfère et abandonne tous mes droits, titres, intérêts, avantages et toutes autres capacités de jouissance quelconque concernant, visant ou touchant ce bien mobilier, autrement connu sous le nom d'orange ou citrus aurantium, ainsi que toutes ses appartenances, circonstances et dépendances telles que peau, chair, pépins, pelure, graines et jus, à toi, mon fils présumé, c'est-à-dire, eu égard aux circonstances particulières de l'espèce et selon la prépondérance des probabilités, l'enfant de sexe masculin né de l'union de fait de ma conjointe avec le conjoint de ta mère en l'occurrence et sauf erreur, moi (du moins, l'espère-je) , pour usage en propre ou en ton nom, ainsi qu'à tes héritiers, descendants et ayants droit, en toute propriété et pour tous temps à venir, libre de toute charge, servitude, limitation, restriction ou quelconque condition, nonobstant tout acte, document, convention ou autre instrument antérieurs de quelque nature que ce soit fait, signé ou validé maintenant ou n'importe où et portant un effet contraire, et ce, avec pleine autorisation de croquer, couper, sucer ou autrement consommer la dite orange ou encore de l'aliéner au profit d'un tiers à titre gratuit ou onéreux avec ou sans la peau, la chair, les pépins, la pelure, les graines ou le jus. »

► Source: <http://www.avocat.qc.ca/humour/humour.htm>

## How to Win Friends and Influence Judges:

Well, maybe not. A pro se litigant filed a Notice of Appeal in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington stating:

"I hereby am informing you that I am appealing the a--h--- Ronald B. Leighton's decision in this matter. You have been hereby served notice. You're not getting away with this s---that easy.

Signed this 10th day of July 2006, George C. Swinger, Jr. Plaintiff/Pro Se"

From *George C. Swinger, Jr. v. Michael B. Cole, et al.*, Case No. 3:04-CV-05348-RBL, July 12, 2006.

► Source: <http://www.lawhaha.com/strange.asp>

## Wacky US cases:

**UNITED STATES ex rel. Gerald MAYO v. SATAN AND HIS STAFF**, 54 F.R.D. 282 (W.D. Pa., 1971): Landmark class action suit against The Prince of Darkness shelved on a technicality.

**UNITED STATES v. 11 1/4 DOZEN PACKAGES OF ARTICLE LABELED IN PART MRS. MOFFET'S SHOO FLY POWDERS FOR DRUNKENNESS**, 40 F.Supp. 208 (W.D.N.Y. 1941): Say what?  
**KLUMP v. DUFFUS**, 71 F.3d 1368 (7th Cir. 1995): Action dropped: both litigants too dumb.

**STATE OF INDIANA v. VIRTUE**, 658 N.E.2d 605 (1995): State of Indiana affirms vice as a founding constitutional principle.

**SILVER v. GOLD**, 211 Cal.App.3d 17, 259 Cal.Rptr. 185 (1989): Gold won due to the Golden Rule: "He who has the gold makes the rules".

► Source: <http://members.aol.com/schwenkler/wcc/>



# WINE TASTING

Jeudi 23 novembre à 19h30

Thomson House basement (restaurant)

15\$ pour les membres, 20\$ pour les autres

RSVP : [vino.mcgill@gmail.com](mailto:vino.mcgill@gmail.com)

*Brought to you by the McGill Law Wine Appreciation Club*

***Prix Gulrajani-Casullo du meilleur rapport qualité-prix***

Awarded at the November 1st tasting

Cabernet Sartori piave 2003

Italy

SAQ code: 00504308, price: \$11.95

